

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Serial No. 10/757,503
Sughrue Ref: Q79425

REMARKS

By way of this Amendment, Applicants have amended the title, the specification as well as claim 1. In addition, claim 3 has been cancelled. Claims 1-6 are all the claims pending in the application. For the following reasons, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-6 have been rejected under § 101, § 112 (first paragraph) and § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,977,828.

With respect to the § 101 rejection, the Examiner contends that the claimed invention lacks patentable utility because the specification fails to explain the importance of the requirement in the claims that a clearance be provided between each of the pressers 50a, 50b, and the shaft 40.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. More specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the utility of providing a clearance between each of the pressers 50a and 50b and the shaft 40 would be “immediately apparent to those familiar with the technological field of the invention,” as required by MPEP § 2107.01. It is readily apparent that providing a clearance between the pressers and the shaft avoids friction therebetween and also allows the roller core 44 to tilt toward and away from the shaft such that the roller core can contact the entire surface of the sheet and achieve smooth feeding of uneven sheets. Thus, although this utility may not be discussed in the specification, the utility would immediately be appreciated by a person of ordinary skill in the art. In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Serial No. 10/757,503
Sughrue Ref: Q79425

Turning to the related § 112 (first paragraph) rejection, Applicants respectfully again submit that since the usefulness of the clearance is readily apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art, it is improper to reject the claims under § 112 (first paragraph). As to the Examiner's assertion that the recitation of the clearance constitutes new matter, Applicants respectfully disagree. The clearance is shown in Figure 3 of the application, as identified in the marked-up copy of Figure 3 attached hereto. Thus, it cannot be seen how the Examiner could contend that this feature of the invention is new matter. Hence, it is respectfully requested that the § 112 (first paragraph) rejection of the claims be withdrawn as well.

Turning to the prior art rejection based on Douglas, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the pressers have a substantially cylindrical shape, as shown in Figure 3 of the application. In contrast, the end caps 122 of Douglas, which the Examiner analogizes to the claimed pressers, do not have a such a shape but rather have a substantially U-shape in cross-section, as shown in Figure 5 of the reference. The end caps 122 have an enlarged radial flanged outer end 124 formed with a central opening 128 for receiving the stub axle 56 therethrough. As such, it is clear that the opening 128 of Douglas is different from the clearance of the present invention both in terms of its shape and its function. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the § 102 rejection of the claims based on Douglas be withdrawn. Further, Applicants note that claim 6 recites the presence of a pair of spacers which are coupled to the pair of pressers. This feature of the invention is not taught or suggested in Douglas.

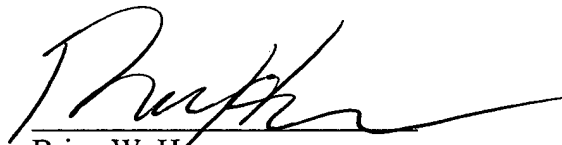
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the claims pending in the application are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the application be passed to

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Serial No. 10/757,503
Sughrue Ref: Q79425

issue at the earliest possible convenience. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian W. Hannon
Registration No. 32,778

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: November 1, 2004